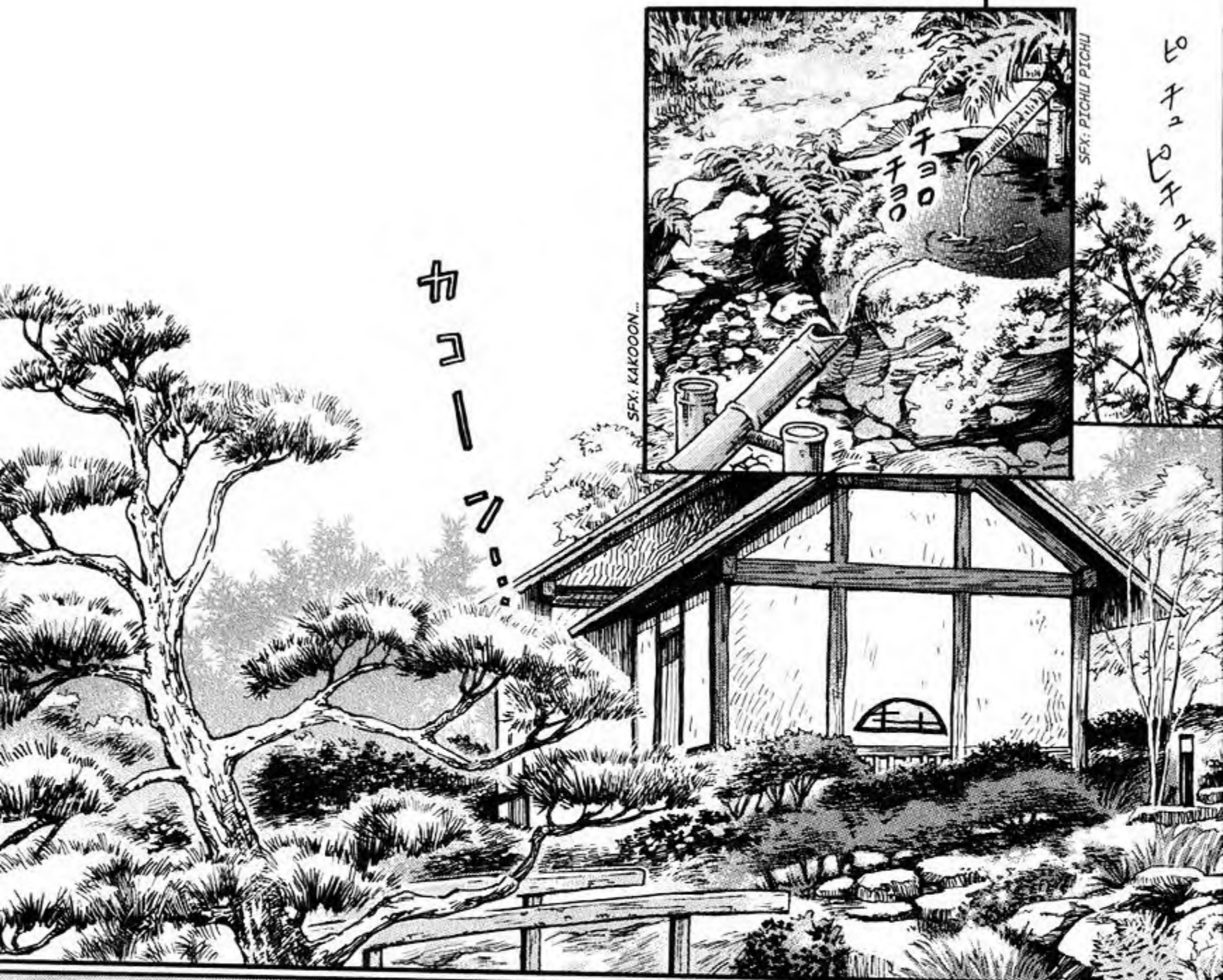




Chapter 79

Burnt Field ①





IT'LL LOOK
LIKE 'HEY, IF
ONE OF THEM
COLLAPSES AT
ANY TIME, WE'LL
STILL BE OKAY!!

AND WHY NOT?!
LET'S HAVE A
NURSE OR
SOMEBODY ON
STANDBY IN THE
NEXT ROOM!

LEAVE THAT FOR
NOW, HOW ABOUT
WITH THE CAMERA

Live Broadcast
Heart Rate 54 Beats/Min.
Remaining Time 07:42

ALONG WITH
THE REMAINING
TIME, WE PUT
AN ELECTRO-
CARDIOGRAM AND A
HEART RATE
DIAGRAM?!!

HA
HA
HA...
HA

SEX, BOND, GOJO

Do you know
how tight we
are right
now?!

We've got five
newspapers
co-sponsoring this,
but they're all tiny
local papers and
the budget is
getting slashed.

The Kishou
Championship is
my life!!

but this is
one of the
historic 7
Major Titles,
you know?!

Sure, it
may be
kind of
small-
scale,

Toku-chan!!
Give us a
break!!

Announcement Related
Leverage
Suggestions

Severe Budget

DITCH

Plan

Could you
please stop
making fun of
us like that?!!

A 5-MINUTE WALK
FROM TOKYO JR
SENDAGAYA
STATION

WILL HAVE
TO HAVE
ALL THE
GAMES
HERE AT
THE SHOGI
ASSOCIA-
TIONOOON!!

EVEN AT THE
BEST OF TIMES,
SINCE IT
HAPPENS AT
ALMOST THE
SAME TIME AS
THE MEIJIN
CHAMPIONSHIP,

BUSINESS IS
STILL SLOW!!

THE KISHOU
CHAMP-
IONSHIP...
THEN
STARTING
NEXT
YEAR
—IF INTEREST
AND CROWD
GO ANY LOWER

KYAAAAAA
AHHH!!

SFX: KUWAHH

MAKE SURE
YOU GET THEM
REALLY HYPED,
WOULD YOU?

SO DON'T
HOLD BACK
BOYS,

IS ALL UP
TO YOU
GUYS!



WHETHER
NEXT YEAR'S
KISHOU
CHAMPIONSHIP
ENDS UP AS
'ENTIRELY IN
THE SHOGI
ASSOCIATION
BUILDING'
OR NOT

GOOD
LUCK.
☆

SO...

—AND

HUGE
RESPONSIBILITY

HA
HA

HA
HAH
HA

SFX: GULPPP...

*These two have been put in charge of the big-board commentary.

OF COURSE,
WE'RE GONNA
GIVE IT OUR
ALL!

It'll be a
great
big-board
commentary
00
00

WHY IS THAT
ANIJYA?

Why are you
getting serious
all of a sudden?

HUH?

—BUT I AM
GLAD YOU
GUYS ARE
COMING OUT
FOR IT.

NO.

SERIOUSLY.

—YOU'LL
SEE...

HA

HA

HA

HA

You been
doing all
right?!

KAN-CHAN!!
IT'S BEEN
A WHILE!

HEY
THEERE!

**KAKU-
CHAN!!
YASU-
CHAN!!**

IT'S BEEN
A WHILE!!
HOW ARE
YOU GUYS
DOING?!!

**I'M GLAD I
WAS ABLE
TO SEE YOU
AGAIN THIS
YEAR!!**

THIS IS WHAT
MAKES THIS
WHOLE THING
UNIQUE...

110 43
110 43
110 43

SFX: WAA WAA PACHI PACHI
PACHI (CLAP CLAP CLAP)



NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO, THERE'S THE VOICE OF ONE GROUP...

OF COURSE, THEY ALSO DO SO DURING ON THEIR WAY THERE AND BACK.

THEY'LL GO TO BATHS, GO TO A SALON TO DRINK COFFEE

AT THIS POINT

EVEN IF IT'S DURING THE TITLE MATCH

OR GO EAT SOMEWHERE AND IT ALWAYS HAS THIS ATMOSPHERE.

HE HAS HELD TITLES FOR A TOTAL OF 14 PERIODS.

TRULY A MONSTER.

HE'S AN A-CLASS PLAYER STILL ACTIVE AT AGE 66.

-YOU'VE GOT TO ADMIT, HE'S GOOD.

IT'S THE ONE OF THE MOST CUNNING THING ABOUT THAT OLD MAN.

HE MAKES THE WHOLE ATMOSPHERE POINT TOWARDS HIM.



I WANT MY FIRST TITLE!!

I REALLY WANT IT... NO MATTER WHERE I NEED TO SINK MY FANGS INTO...

BUT IN THIS 5-GAME KISHOU CHAMPIONSHIP

I'VE MANAGED TO CHASE HIM DOWN TO A SCORE OF 2-2.



HE'S MORE LIKE THE LEVEL OF A SPECTER.

AT THIS POINT

NO, ACTUALLY

—AN EXTRA-LARGE ONE.



BUT I'M
ENDING IT.

I FEEL
SORRY
ABOUT THE
OLD MAN'S
REUNION,

—AND

I'M
TAKING
THAT
TITLE.
YOU CAN
COUNT
ON IT.



? WHAT'S
WRONG? IS
HE FEELING
SICK?

GAN-
CHAN
IS
SUPPOSED
TO BE
COMING,
BUT...

OH,
YEAH...

HEY,
WHERE'S
GAN-CHAN?

HE'S NOT
HERE.

HM?



HEY,
SAKU-
CHAN.

WHAT'S
WRONG?
THE NIGHT-
BEFORE
PARTY IS
GOING ON
NOW, ISN'T
IT?

SORRY...
SAKU-CHAN.

IN THE DAYS
RIGHT BEFORE
YOUR BIG TITLE
MATCH WITH
BAD NEWS
LIKE THAT...

I DIDN'T
WANT TO
RAIN ON
YOUR ON
YOUR
PARADE

THERE WAS
RESTRUCT-
URING.

WELL,
TO MAKE
A LONG
STORY
SHORT,

AND AT THE
END OF MAY,
I LEFT THE
COMPANY...

—I RECEIVED
AN UNOFFICIAL
REQUEST THAT
I RETIRE
EARLIER.

SFX: CHORO, CHORO

WHY DON'T
YOU JUST TAKE
IT EASY AND
USE YOUR LIFE
TO HAVE FUN?

GAN-
CHAN,

—YOU'VE
WORKED
WAY MORE
THAN HARD
ENOUGH...

YOU'VE SPENT
ALL THIS TIME
CARRYING A
HUGE CAMERA
DAY AND
NIGHT.

I JUST
CAN'T SIT
STILL...

THINK
ABOUT HOW
YOU'RE STILL
FIGHTING...

—BUT,
SAKU-CHAN,
WHEN I

—MY WIFE
SAID THE
SAME THING.

BUT

MY
DAUGHTER,
TOO...



*I wonder how long now I've been the
oldest one there wherever I go?*



The comrades I fought with just started disappearing



one by one...

And then all that was left



was this old body

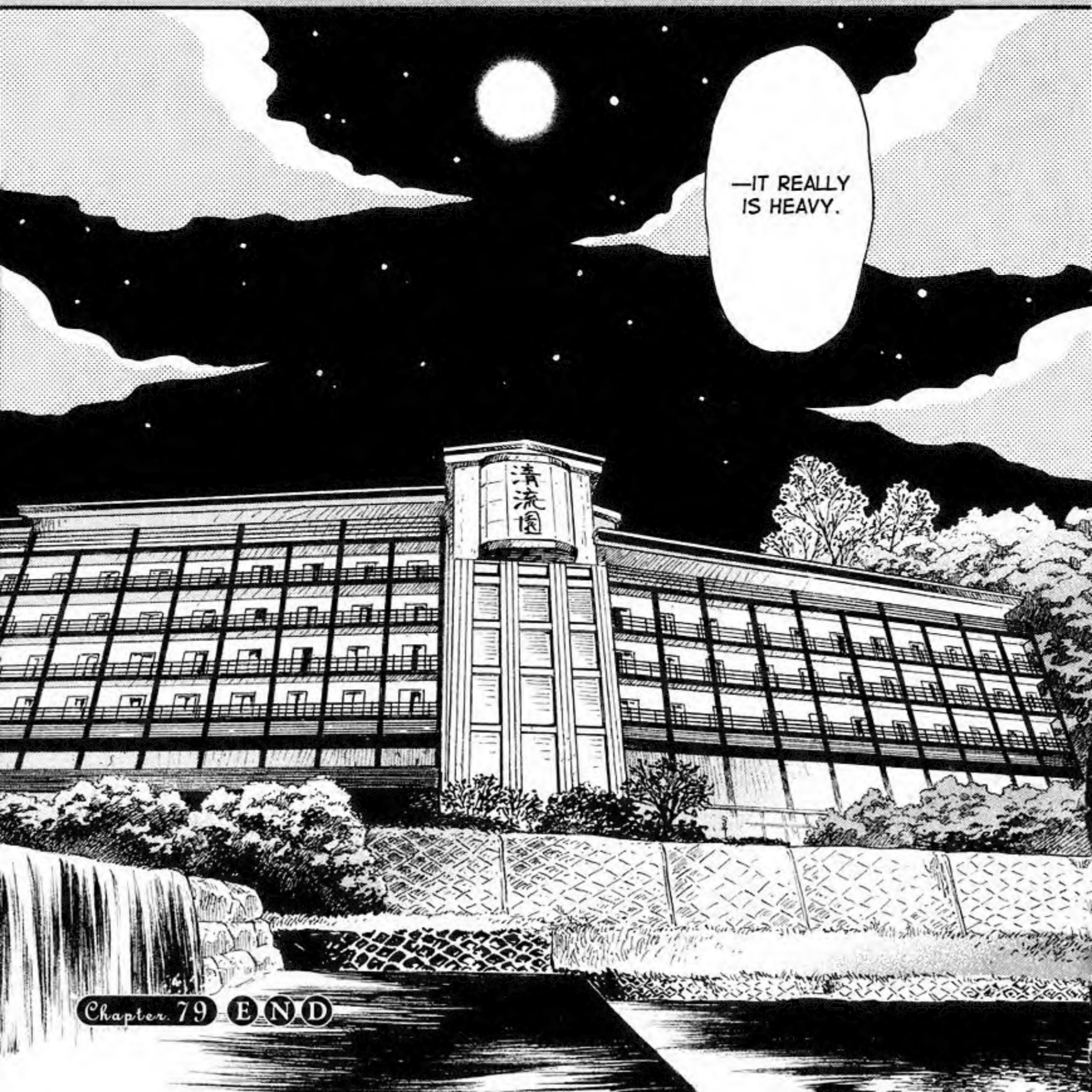


and this enormous number of tasuki



YEAH...

that were entrusted to me...



-IT REALLY
IS HEAVY.

THE SECRET TO THE GROWING NUMBER OF OLD PLAYERS STILL FULL OF PEP...

At the present moment (December 2012) the oldest active player is Naitou Kuno 9-dan at age 73 and the 2nd is Katou Hifumi 9-dan at 72 years. These two have been among the top 3 ranked players for the last 6 or 7 years.

With the current society living with such longevity these two have some scruples with being called senior shogi players but honestly, with shogi being a game of the mind, there aren't many players active at this age. As most players tend to win less with age, most retire at some point.

Also, Naitou 9-dan and Katou 9-dan are of course exceptions for being excellent shogi players that are still actively pushing themselves. They even fight hard in the battles of stamina that are rank-deciding games with 6 hours of available time. Of course their win rates aren't as good as they were in their heyday, but they frequently dominate other players that are younger than their own children; no-one respects their perseverance and endurance more than their fellow pro shogi players.

The special characteristics of these top-age players is such that they have their own world - they have the idea that in their world, if things are in this form, they're sure they can win. Naitou 9-dan has a unique sense for mutual-attack strategies that makes even top players moan, Naitou 9-dan has a Yagura strategy and a Rising Gin strategy for use against Ranging Hisha with excellent technical proficiency - they have the so-called veteran flavor to them so when these strategies work well, young players submit. In the industry they say if these players get the game into one of their good lines, they're strong.

One could say that after these two, the next are Mori Keiji 9-dan, Tanaka Kaishuu 9-dan, and Kiriya Kiyozumi 9-dan (All around 65 years old). Mori 9-dan is extra sharp in his end-games, Tanaka 9-dan has magnificent lines in the mid-game and Kiriya 9-dan has an ever-changing, inimitable style of play that is sometimes subdued and sometimes extreme. These five were all active when I was training in the Shourekai and are all people I admire unconditionally.

In Lion, there is a player called Yanagihara-san that is 66 years old in A-class and has the title of Kishou; I think the model for him is the late Ooyama the 15th Meijin - a great player that's representative of the Shouwa Era. Ooyama-sensei was active until his death at age 69 and was an A-class player; there are truly no words for someone that can go that far - he was truly a monster.

Ooyama-sensei publicly declared that he would retire if he ever dropped from A-class, so whenever it seemed like he might go down in rank there would be a lot of commotion for the whole shogi world and all his fans.

I wonder what senior players there will be in the future? Will the generation I'm in, the ones born around 1970 and the so-called Habu Generation, end up retiring or sticking around to bully younger players...? Yes, I wonder.

HI WA MATA NOBORU

THE SUN WILL RISE AGAIN

3-GATSU NO LION VOLUME 8

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